

Farrakhan's 50-nation Friendship Tour to include Iraq, Kuwait, Israel

Special to the NNPA
From the Final Call

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Black America's most controversial and popular Muslim was given a warm send-off Nov. 28 during a rally/press conference at Union Temple Baptist Church, where some 3,000 Muslims, Christians, black nationalists and leaders of organizations came to wish him well as he embarks on a 50-nation World Friendship Tour.

At the celebration, Farrakhan discussed his Third World Friendship Tour and the reasons for it. It is time for blacks in America to get involved in "international affairs," to lead a world gone off course back to peace, he said.

Blacks in the United States, the descendants of slaves, must understand that they are an international people, he told the crowd. "It's no accident that we live in America ... that your fathers were brought here in the holds of ships," he said.

Most of the minister's 90-minute lecture was spent detailing his hopes that the tour would help bring peace to a world engulfed in conflict and yield trade, cultural and intellectual relationships for the black community.

Farrakhan detailed plans to visit Israel, where a peace deal brokered by the United States, Egypt and Jordan three years ago has nearly dissolved and violence between Palestinians and Jews has escalated.

"That area is so critical to world peace that if war breaks out there, it may bring the whole earth into the war which is called Armageddon," the minister warned.

Other tour stops include Iran (for an Islamic conference), Iraq, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Israel, Palestine, China, Malaysia, Singapore, 20 countries in Africa, Libya, North and South Korea, the former Soviet Union and nations in the South Pacific, the Caribbean and South America.

"I would like to demonstrate how diplomacy and friendly relations should be carried out," Min. Farrakhan said, explaining how the United States and other world governments have strayed from the path to peace.

According to the Muslim minister, the U.S. government is making "a grave mistake" in its dealing with Iraq and the Arab and Muslim world. Increasingly bad U.S. foreign policy toward Muslim nations, namely Iraq and Libya, could bring "grave consequences" to the United States," he said.

The Minister also pointed out the double standard employed by the United States in dealing with Arab governments compared to European governments.

"The Cold War is over, so America wants to help Russia," Farrakhan noted. "The war with Iraq has been over nearly seven years, and seven years after the war is over, nearly a million and a half Iraqis have died," but no help has come

from the United States, he said. "The war has continued in the name of sanctions. What's the problem, America? ... Well we have a mad man over there, Saddam Hussein, and he is making weapons of mass destruction."

The Iraqi president "can hide weapons for seven years, but he can't even fix an incubator in a hospital?" asked Farrakhan.

"When it becomes policy to destroy, the American people's minds are prepared so that you can go along with the policy. They want Saddam Hussein dead, so they started the media campaign. Now, some of them are getting on the television openly calling for the man's assassination," he told the audience.

"I don't know who's advising the president, but he needs better advice. I'm not lobbying for the job," Farrakhan said. "But you know sometimes God raises from the abject someone to give the powerful and the great wise guidance. It seems to me that ... America needs overhauling."

The press conference/rally was the spark that ignited a flurry of media events for the fast-moving Muslim leader, whose grueling schedule over the last two years has included two legs of his World Friendship Tours — one to Africa and the Middle East, the other to the Caribbean.

Earlier that day he appeared on CNN's news program "Evans and Novak." The Minister discussed his desire to bring peace among Muslims in the Middle East, destroy the idea of terrorism against innocent life and to see Israel halt construction of settlements in the Occupied Territories.

He said that every time America misuses her tremendous power, she loses influence among Muslims and her allies. And concerning America's demand for a trial in the United States or Britain instead of a neutral country of the Libyans accused of the Pan Am 103 bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland, Farrakhan said: "America uses her influence to impose sanctions ... over an incident they haven't proved is entirely correct. We ought to go to trial somewhere to find where the truth lies."

The Muslim leader was also questioned on Fox television's "The Tony Snow Show." Farrakhan said he hopes President Clinton and his advisers would see the failure of policies toward Saddam Hussein and immediately end the sanctions on Iraq.

"Let's sit down and talk to Saddam Hussein, leader-to-leader, human being to human being. And I do believe he wants a better relationship with America, and I hope when I go to Iraq that I will be able to report to American people that here is a man that is ready to sit down to talk with the American administration and come to terms with the disagreements with America," he said.

Farrakhan also dispatched Nation of Islam attorneys Ministers Ava Muhammad and Arif Muhammad to

the State Department for a briefing with Secretary of State Madeline Albright in response to a suggestion by U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Bill Richardson on television news show "Meet the Press." Ministers Benjamin Muhammad and Kevin Muhammad in New York were dispatched to the United Nations to seek a meeting with Richardson.

Representatives of various groups and organizations attending the send-off hailed Farrakhan's World Friendship tour.

Ahmed Al-Kaissy of the Iraqi diplomatic mission, told *The Final Call* that if anyone could bring peace to the world, even in Iraq, it is Farrakhan.

"The Iraqi people thank Minister Farrakhan for what he is doing at the present time to uplift these unjust economic sanctions against Iraq. He has the highest voice in the world these days, and can reach the whole world," Al Kaissy said.

"It is important for us to send Minister Farrakhan off on this very important mission," said Maryland state Sen. Clarence Mitchell IV, who hoped the trip would solidify economic linkages for black America with Africa and China.

"Baltimore has the largest open-water port on the East Coast. We can

make use of that with linkages with African and Asian nations, but we're not doing that right now. I'm hoping that Minister Farrakhan can build that bridge," Mitchell said.

During his tour, Farrakhan plans to answer an invitation extended by Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Sheik Mohammed Al-Jamal Ar Rifni, the resident imam at Al-Asqa Mosque in Jerusalem. The minister was invited to visit and pray at the mosque, the third holiest shrine in Islam.

While in Israel, the minister would like to meet with the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli government. "I know there will be some who'll say 'don't give him an ear,' but I will only offer to come," he said.

But Farrakhan stressed that the role of peacemaker is not his alone. "God is raising you (black Americans) up to play an important role in world affairs," he said.

"You are chosen of God really to bring about complete change in this country. You are the soul of it. You have soul to give America a sense of balance now that she's imbalanced by her own power, wealth and corruption. God is raising you up, you are no longer the old plantation boy or girl that you were," he said.

Businesses, parents collaborate to improve public education

The Greater Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce has announced a significant collaboration of private and public sector participants in an effort to encourage more effective parental involvement in children's education process.

The Chamber is partnering with Wachovia Bank, James Fyock & Associates, Ingram Art and the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools to produce three workshops, which will air on local Cable Channel 2, the School Channel. Videotapes will also be available to local organizations, at cost, for use with parent groups.

The workshops, "Recipes for Success — Parental Involvement in Children's Education," focus on sharing practical ideas with parents on how to be proactively involved in their children's education process to ensure the highest

quality education possible. Research shows that an essential component of a child's education process is the active involvement of parents and other significant caregivers.

Fred Nordenholz, president of the Chamber, said, "We continue to be impressed by local businesses' willingness to support this series and the many other educational initiatives developed by the Chamber and school system in recent years."

"The local business community has shown a strong and growing commitment to increasing the quality of education in Forsyth County. We believe this will help to enhance the long-term quality of the work force in Forsyth County."

The workshops were held at the Wachovia Center in November and will be aired in January. About 150 people participated.

Satellites and space probes discussed at WSSU workshop

National Aeronautics and Space Administration Education specialist Lawrence J. Gilbert of Langley Research Center Education Division, Hampton, Va., conducted an aerospace teacher enhancement workshop and a science lecture/demonstration at Winston-Salem State University and the Shilohian St. Peter's Child Care Center.

Parents, students and teachers participated in a training session with an informative hands-on approach to critical thinking and problem solving that will reinforce the relevance and broad application of science, mathematics and technology. Instructional materials and strategies that reflect the needs and resources of the 21st century were provided.

The four sessions included teacher training and training of parents, as well as middle grade students of Quality Education Institute and the K-5-year-olds of K-3 level at the Shilohian-St.

Peter's Child Care Center. The program presented an overview of satellites and planetary probes, the space shuttle and space labs, and aeronautics research and development with an emphasis on current and future projects and careers.

The following persons received certification credits: Elvin Rosdhal, Margaret Poston, Shannon Kimel, Shirley Manigault, Tracey McFadden, Cynthia Russell, James Lewis, Aston King, Dr. Manderline Scales, Jermell Barringer, Robin Johnson, Orlando Kilgore, Tamika Price, Johnetta Brown, Sharon Frazier, Damiko Faulkner, NaKendra Magee and Monica McNeill.

The sponsors of the program are Dr. Manderline Scales of the Classroom of the Future National Advisory Committee and Dr. Shirley Manigault, chairwoman of the English and Foreign Language departments at Winston-Salem State University.



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